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Title: Need to grant financial assistance to the banana cultivators in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI S.S. RAMASUBBU (TIRUNELVELI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a very important matter related to agriculture. In my constituency, Tirunelveli, a large number of people are engaged in farming and their main cultivation is paddy, banana plantation and vegetables. On many occasions, their crops which are sufficiently grown and are in the yielding or harvesting stage are suddenly getting damaged due to the occurrence of powerful 'whirlwinds' and as a result, overnight, they are incurring heavy losses and are unable to recover even their sowing cost and are often driven into debt trap.

Recently, on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2012, about three-lakh banana plants which were in advanced stage of reaping got damaged because of a powerful 'whirlwind'. It is occurring frequently with the result the farmers from Thirukharankudi, Cheranmadevi, Eravadi, Kalakad, V.K. Puram, Ambasamudiram, Kadayam and Nanguneri incurred heavy losses.

Though the Government is providing compensation to farmers for crop losses due to flood, drought, Tsunami by considering them under the head of 'natural calamity', but 'whirlwind' is not considered as a 'natural calamity'.

I shall, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to direct the authorities for providing adequate compensation to the Banana farmers in my area who have incurred heavy losses due to 'whirlwind', and also 'whirlwind' should be considered as a 'natural calamity' so as to facilitate the farmers and enable them for getting adequate compensation since 'whirlwind' is occurring and affecting the farmers not only in my area but throughout the country. The 'whirlwind' which is affecting the farmers may be considered as a 'natural calamity'.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri P.T. Thomas is allowed to associate himself on this issue.